

Hidy-Ho, retiree, and a Happy New Year! Welcome to the latest **eNEWS** - the **PMEA Retired Member Network**... an informal alliance and forum for interconnecting retired music educators and sharing their ideas, stories, successes, news, and views via this e-mail address. Thanks for staying involved in PMEA and our profession!



## What would YOU like from PMEA?

Hope your New Year's celebrations were fun! This is the time many of us reflect on our goals (map out new directions), and as your Retired Member Coordinator, I hope to renew my efforts in providing YOU with more meaningful services and opportunities. After a review of 2015, I guess Retired Members are permitted to brag a little... the **Retiree Resource Registry** is up and running (the third edition is posted on the web while we welcome our newest enrollees **Mark Jelinek** and **Jim Seidel** who will appear in the next update). Retirees assisted on the research and release of listings of **PA Community Bands/Orchestras & Choirs**. Numerous articles, retired member "spotlights," and other resources to promote a smooth and healthy transition to retirement are published in every issue of *PMEA News* and archived in our section on the PMEA webpage. We enjoyed "breaking bread" together at last year's **PMEA Spring Conference**, and look forward to another free breakfast meeting in Hershey on April 1.



However, for the future, how do I "reach you" to hear your interests, needs, and thoughts? Some Retired Members simply move on to related music/education careers or new pursuits, and are not active in PMEA. However, others seem to want to contribute to the profession and be kept "in the loop." **How can I do a better job and help you?**

In three or four weeks, the PMEA office staff and I plan to send out a survey on the **PMEA Summer Conference**, to poll your ideas and assessments of past July workshops, and especially to learn about what you and your family may be interested in doing at the Seven Springs resort. Please "let us have it" and make your opinions known. Together we can collaborate on planning the greatest social event of the year... and if you choose not to sit in a room and write curriculum or SLOs all day, but rather play tennis, golf, paintball, or bowling, Seven Springs is the perfect place to "get in on!"

When the Wufoo link comes in the next **eNEWS**, please send us your input. How would you define "fun" at a PMEA summer event? Keep in touch: [paulkfox.usc@gmail.com](mailto:paulkfox.usc@gmail.com).



## On the horizon... PMEA Conferences are a-coming!

You had to notice the great new format of *PMEA News*, most recently the Winter 2015 issue. Copies are also available online to read "on the go" under the password-protected section of the PMEA website: <http://www.pmea.net/resources/pmea-news/>.

The main focus of our last state journal is the **PMEA Spring In-Service Conference:**

- Conference Schedule Overview (pp. 10-24)
- Opening General Session: NAFME President Glenn Nierman, PMEA Outstanding Superintendent, and IUP Faculty Woodwind Quintet (March 31 at 8:45 a.m.) pp. 11
- PROJECT Trio Featured Performance Thursday, March 31 pp. 17
- Friday General Session: Keynote Speaker Keith Brion, New Sousa Band, and Norwin Percussion Ensemble April 1 pp. 21
- PMEA Awards Breakfast April 2 pp. 24
- PMEA All-State Concerts April 2 Orchestra/Band 10:30 a.m. and Wind Ensemble/Chorus 3:00 p.m. pp. 24
- Guest Performances (Thursday, March 31 pp. 26-27 and Friday, April 1 pp. 28-29)
- Registration Form (Retired Member \$10/early \$15/regular \$15/onsite) pp. 34
- Centerfold Pullout (pass it on) near pp. 38-39

You have already heard "my rant" about the **PMEA Summer Conference** at Seven Springs on July 12-13. See attached flier to tempt you about their recreation offerings!

For more info, go to <http://www.pmea.net/> (look under "Conferences and Events").

## And now, some levity! Have you heard these?

- Old composers never die; they just decompose.
- Old performers never die; they just go out of tune.
- Old musicians never die; they just go from bar to bar.
- Old musical producers never die; they just make a big production out of it.
- Old band nerds never die; they just leave after halftime.
- Old music teachers never die; they just lose their class.
- Old rockers never die; they just shake, rattle, and roll.
- Old lighting directors (or sound engineers) never die; they just fade away.
- Old singers never die; they just perform another encore.
- Old conductors never die; they just lose their place.
- Old string players never die; they just get strung out.
- Old jazz artists never die; they just play on and on.



**Retirees, it's 2016, a brand new year of choices!  
Lets look to filling up and fulfilling new "bucket lists!"**

**Retirement is a journey**, offering another roadway towards self-realization. You would expect to see any newly retired person enjoying the fruits of his/her career-long labor by "taking a break" - exploring travel, sightseeing, fitness training, sports, gardening, home improvements, reading, babysitting grandchildren, rescuing a pet, volunteering, attending concerts/musicals/movies, discovering and developing new hobbies, skills, or talents, hanging out with former coworkers - you name it! Retired music educators are no different!



However, one advantage of being in the profession of teaching self-expression is that it was never "just a job." Now you can revisit and revitalize your **"creativity roots,"** the reason you got involved in music and music education in the first place. One of your first priorities when you retire from full-time employment in music education should be to pull that instrument out of the closet, brush it off, warm up on it a little, and begin restarting your regime of training those chops (or vocal skills) once more. If you have not done so previously, go out and join a local community band, orchestra, choir, or participate in a chamber, jazz, dance, or drama group.

As I remarked earlier, thanks to the contributions of many PMEA Retired Members, we now post lists of the **Community Bands and Orchestras and Community Choirs** on the PMEA website (go to [www.pmea.net](http://www.pmea.net), select "focus areas," and "retired members.") The Spring 2016 issue of *PMEA News* will spotlight the Pennsylvania choruses and the benefits of singing (really no-brainers for us), but the directories are now ready online for you enjoy! The groups are sorted both by the title of the ensemble and the location. Please send any additions and corrections to [paulkfox.usc@gmail.com](mailto:paulkfox.usc@gmail.com).

What else? Seize the day (as they say) and **embrace opportunities for volunteering**, possibly going back to the school and offering your professional services on a "very" part-time basis. Perhaps a local music program could use your expertise in setting up new technology, playing the piano, helping to conduct large ensembles or coaching sectionals or chamber groups, organizing or chaperoning music trips, repairing instruments, composing or arranging music for the students, or assisting on the rehearsals or designing the field show for the marching band, dance team, or drum line.



In addition, the "passage to retirement" allows a re-examination of ourselves and discovery of new interests, conceivably some **non-music volunteer activities**. Select a project or two that will help satisfy your need to help others and "nurture your soul." My personal favorite pastime (besides retaining my "conductor chops" by directing a youth orchestra on Saturdays) is to serve as a volunteer escort at our local hospital. In addition to walking dogs several times a day, pushing wheelchairs several days a week is good physical exercise, but more importantly, it is a big help to the efficient and economical operation of any mid- to large-sized medical facility.

What's that inspiring quote? "I thought I was poor because I had no shoes, until I met a man who had no feet." My wife and I get a lot of personal satisfaction **helping people who are less fortunate than we are**, especially those who are much more senior to us. By now (after two years plus of retirement), I believe we are now nearly expert "wheelchair jockeys." At the hospital, you meet many wonderful people, the majority of whom are undergoing a (hopefully temporary) life challenge... surgery, treatment, observation, rehabilitation, etc. It has to be said that we have found that "patients are the most patient," and individuals with the most serious conditions are usually the most appreciative and display the sweetest dispositions. Of course, our favorite wheelchair trip is to the family birth center, where the majority of the time, we get to escort a mother with her new baby to the car.

What are other volunteer opportunities? Lists of needy programs are too numerous to print in **eNEWS**. However, I shared many of them in one of my blogs. Go to <https://paulkfoxusc.wordpress.com/2015/08/14/retirement-reflection-renewal-benevolence/>. That is also where you can find the definition of "**eleemosynary**," the term defining what you will become (besides happy) when you serve as a volunteer.

### Lookout! PMEA retirees are "on the move!"



It's all about storytelling! I need to hear about any recent accomplishments and "happenings" of Retired Members to feature in our state journal *PMEA News* and future **eNEWS**. Send updates about your travels, job appointments, special projects, "happy" retiree tales, and your thoughts in response of current events or music education trends... anything newsy! **Happy trails, retirees!** PKF

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